

# What is a Stroke?

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A stroke, sometimes called a brain attack, occurs when a clot blocks the flow of blood to the brain or when a blood vessel in the brain breaks. This decrease in blood flow to the brain can result in temporary or permanent brain injury.

## What are the effects of stroke?

Damage from stroke can affect your entire body resulting in mild to severe disabilities including the inability to move your arm, leg or both, and problems with thinking, speaking, swallowing, and emotions. Your symptoms tell us where the stroke happened in the brain and how much of the brain is involved.

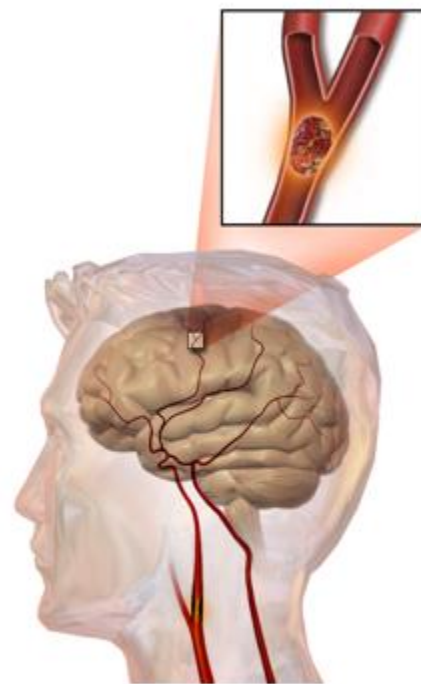
## What are the different types of stroke?

### Ischemic stroke

Ischemic stroke is the most common type of stroke. It occurs when a blood clot blocks the flow of blood to your brain. If the body cannot clear the blockage, then the area is permanently damaged.

There are 2 types of ischemic strokes:

- Thrombotic strokes** are caused when a blood clot (also called thrombus) forms in an artery going to your brain.
- Embolic strokes** are caused by a wandering blood clot (also called embolus) that forms somewhere else



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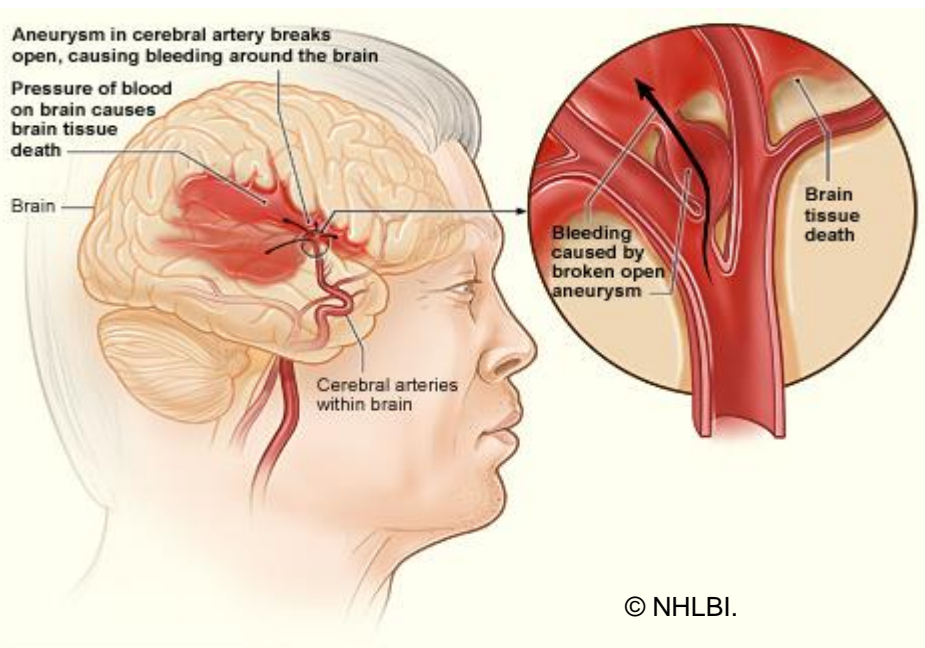
in your body (usually heart or neck) and travels to an artery in your brain.

**Hemorrhagic stroke**

A hemorrhagic stroke is less common than an ischemic stroke. It occurs when a weak blood vessel breaks and bleeds into the brain.

There are 2 types of hemorrhagic stroke:

- An intracerebral hemorrhage (ICH)** is caused by a weak blood vessel breaking **in** the brain.
- A subarachnoid hemorrhage (SAH)** is caused by a weak blood vessel breaking **on** the surface of the brain.



**Am I at risk for another stroke?**

Having a stroke means you are at a greater risk for having another stroke. You can decrease your chance of having another stroke by making lifestyle changes and taking your medicine as directed by your doctor.

With help and advice from your doctor here's what you can do to decrease your odds of having a second stroke:

- Stop smoking
- Take all medication as prescribed and visit your doctor as often as recommended
- Manage all other medical conditions especially high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes
- Eat a healthy diet
- With your doctor's approval increase your physical activity or start an exercise program.
- Limit your alcohol use

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